

Interagency Wildfire Management Team
Meeting Notes
July 3, 2002

Diana Webb (Risk Reduction and Environmental Stewardship Division, LANL) reported that the Lab will host the University of California President's Council on the National Laboratories Environment, Safety, and Health from July 29 to 30. This tour is part of the University of California annual review of the Environment, Safety, and Health programs at the Laboratory. Steve Mee will give a tour to the participants on the tree thinning activities and the water retention structure in Pajarito Canyon. Diana also announced that the Planning and Zoning Commission will conduct a Planning and Zoning Fair on the 4th of July.

Elmer Torres (Community Relations Office, LANL) is collaborating with the Pueblos on wildfire issues and additional restrictions that have been implemented during this period of extreme fire danger.

Patrick McCarthy (The Nature Conservancy of New Mexico) reported the progress of the Fire Learning Network Project. In the Jemez Mountains, the Project is mapping the current conditions of the forests and risks from wildfire. Desired future conditions will also be mapped of the forests and woodlands will also be mapped.

Robert Stibbard (Los Alamos County Fire Department) reported that the Fire Department is preparing for the 4th of July festivities in Los Alamos. A public display of fireworks will be conducted in White Rock with 23 fire fighters in support. There has never been a fire start that has been associated with these firework festivities. Robert also reported that the removal of dead trees in the burned areas behind 48th Street is continuing. A few dead trees will be left to provide wildlife habitat. In addition, to prevent blockage of the drainage behind the Quemazon area, all of the dead trees were cut and chipped. The chips were transported to Albuquerque.

Steve Mee (Cerro Grande Rehabilitation Project, LANL) signed a contract to thin 1100 acres in the DX area and in Rendija Canyon. This work will start in August. A contract was also awarded to thin forests adjacent to the administration area at TA-3. Also, Steve reported that burning of excess wood in the forced air incinerators began last week. The plan is to burn 24 hours a day from 8 AM on Mondays to midnight on Thursdays. During the first week of this burning 241 tons of logs and stumps were burned with a reduction to ash of 97 percent. A compressed air foam tanker unit is available in the event of a fire start. Additional wood is being given to the public for use as firewood. Send an email to firewood@lanl.gov for further information. Finally, Steve announced that a some of the small diameter timber will be sold to a private firm for use as vigas.

Dean Clark (Fire Management Officer, Bandelier National Monument) announced that a dry lightning storm on June 21 produced 15 fire starts on Bandelier property. These were extinguished quickly with assistance from several agencies. The weather is beginning to show a trend to more humid conditions. However, next week is predicted to revert to more dry conditions. Finally, Dean reported that the final installation of gravel at the helicopter pad at TA-49 is complete.

Randy Balice (Ecology Group, LANL) was one of the recipients of firewood provided by the Cerro Grande Rehabilitation Project. Randy found the process to be efficient and organized. To get on the list to obtain a truckload of firewood, send an email containing your name, address and phone number to firewood@lanl.gov. Also, the field team has sampled fuel conditions and reduction of fuels after thinning at 27 plots in piñon-juniper woodlands or in ponderosa pine forests.

Pat Valerio (Ecology Group, LANL) and Carey bare will meet with Duncan Leao of the Cerro Grande Rehabilitation Project next to discuss details of the implementation of thinning and fire hazard reduction in Planning Area 5.

Mia Perotta (Private Citizen, Los Alamos) has been investigating the issues of easements and other responsibilities associated with removal of trees on private lands within the County.

The next IWMT meeting will be at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, July 17, at TA-21, Building 210 in the Conference Room (142). The IWMT meets every other week and these meetings are open to the public. Contact Randy Balice (balice@lanl.gov, 665-1270) for further information, or to get on the distribution list for these meeting notes.